



ANDREW P. TAURIAINEN

October 17, 2003

Mr. Paul Dabbs
Statewide Planning Branch
California Department of Water Resources
P.O. Box 942836
Sacramento, CA 94236-0001

Re: California Water Plan Update 2003 (Bulletin 160-03)

Mr. Dabbs:

Westlands Water District ("Westlands"), on behalf of its landowners and water users, submits these comments on the draft California Department of Water Resources' ("DWR") California Water Plan Update 2003, An Investment Guide for California's Water Future ("Draft Bulletin 160-03").

Westlands is a California water district with a contractual right to receive up to 1,150,000 acre-feet of Central Valley Project ("CVP") water from the Bureau of Reclamation ("Reclamation"). Westlands provides water for the irrigation of approximately 574,000 acres on the west side of the San Joaquin Valley, in Fresno and Kings counties, and maintains the authority to protect, on behalf of its landowners and water users, rights that may be of common benefit to lands within Westlands. Draft Bulletin 160-03 provides a description of the state of California water resources and makes recommendations on how California should address issues related thereto. Accordingly, Westlands, as an entity supplying water to a large agricultural area of vital importance to California, has a vital interest in assuring that, in Bulletin 160-03, the descriptions are accurate and recommendations are reasonable and appropriate.

Westlands is disappointed with the release of the Draft Bulletin 160-03. Many individuals, including representatives from Westlands, have invested their time developing Bulletin 160-03. The California Department of Water Resources ("DWR") has now released the Draft Bulletin 160-03 before incorporating, or even addressing, substantive comments made by a significant number of the Bulletin 160-03 Advisory Committee members. This failure by DWR demonstrates a complete disregard for the effort expended and prior commitments made to the Advisory Committee. Westlands submits the following comments with the hope and expectation that they will be incorporated, or at least addressed, in future drafts of Bulletin 160-03.

Westlands reviewed the comments on various drafts of Bulletin 160 prepared on behalf of agriculture industry representatives and presented in: (1) the October 17, 2003 memorandum

to Mr. Jonas Minton from the Bulletin 160 agricultural caucus; (2) the September 23, 2003 letter to Mr. Jonas Minton from members of the Water Plan Advisory Committee; and (3) the September 23, 2003 memorandum from Alex Hildebrand, Bill DuBois, Lloyd Fryer, Brent Graham, Joe Lima, Nancy Pitligiano and Mike Wade to Jonas Minton, Kamyar Guivetchi, Paul Dabbs. Westlands supports the comments presented therein and incorporates those comments herein by reference.

In addition, Westlands presents the following comments, which must be addressed before Bulletin 160-03 is finalized.

Page 3-6: Draft Bulletin 160-03, to determine consumption rate, repeatedly uses California's population as a percentage of the total, national population. Use of the consumption rate for that purpose results in a non-scientific approach, which can cause gross errors.

Page 3-8: The discussion lacks a recognition of crop loss due to urban growth. This discussion is vitally important and must include an analysis of possible impacts to water supply, water cost, the environment (i.e., subsidence, wildlife). In addition, the assumption that climate change will increase yields by an average of 15% and thus require less water is not supported by the B160-03 discussion of climate change impacts on page 3-37. In fact P. 3-27 indicates the opposite, that there may be increases in water requirements due to climate change.

Page 3-10: The discussion of output per acre is wholly arbitrary. There is no recognition of what is the crop-wide average percentage or justification for the existing percentage (i.e. crop mix or changes).

Page 3-11: As to the value per unit of irrigation water, there is no discussion of the cost of agricultural water per acre-foot or crop value and mix in relation to water cost. These discussions are crucial, and are particularly important given the later discussion on types of crops. There must, therefore, be a discussion of how the crops are irrigated, how much water each crop uses, and the cost to produce and obtain the needed water for each crop.

Page 3-15: In the discussion of flood and flood plain management, there lacks a discussion of dams or increased storage. In particular, there should be an explanation of why most dams were originally constructed (i.e., flood control), and a recognition that recent Army Corps of Engineers studies have increased the rate for historical flood events and increased the amounts of water in many watersheds affecting insurance rates. It is inappropriate to defer such a discussion, until page 29, under planning for the uncertain future and referencing CALFED and the Record of Decision for more storage.

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Page 3-19: There lacks a discussion on increased storage for drought protection. Conservation, groundwater management, and conjunctive use require water captured by reservoirs in wet years. Stream flow improvements are prescribed as a source of water, but such actions add nothing to the State's water supply. There will need to be new sources for such water for protection from future droughts.

Page 3-34: Current trends are presented without any data on water use. The Draft Bulletin 160-03 does not show total agricultural water use compared to municipal and industrial use or the increased population affect on the overall supply of water. If current trends are presented, data supporting the trends should also be pre-supplied.

Page 3-38: Draft Bulletin 160-03 appears to assume all crops in the future will be on drip or sprinkler. This assumption is not reasonable. It ignores economic viability and cost issues. Some crops can not be irrigated by drip or sprinkler because the cost is too high to obtain a profit. In other words, the ability to bring product to market cannot be done with the higher priced irrigation methods regardless of the yield.

Page 3-39: The scenarios should include an assumption that the conveyance facilities called for and scheduled in the Cal fed ROD are implemented.

Your consideration of these comments is appreciated. If you have any questions, please contact Jon D. Rubin in this office.

Very truly yours,

KRONICK, MOSKOVITZ, TIEDEMANN & GIRARD
A Professional Corporation



Andrew P. Tauriainen

cc: Thomas Birmingham
James Snow

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